

SLIDELL CHURCH OF CHRIST

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August 16, 2015

Preacher's Point

By *Dan Schillinger*



What is the Meaning of 1 Corinthians 2:9?

Paul the apostle states in 1 Corinthians 1:9, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* (KJV) Heaven is a prepared place (John 14:2, 3) for a prepared people. It will be such a wonderful place, beyond our wildest dreams! I could write about and exult in thoughts of heaven for a long time! But--is heaven what Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 2:9?

Let's consider the context. In my quotation above I left off the initial phrase in the verse, *But as it is written...* This informs us that the rest of the verse is a follow-up from the Old Testament on the topic Paul was already discussing before he got to verse 9. The quite literal American Standard Version of 1901 translates (as Paul draws on Isaiah 64:4 and Isaiah 65:17 from an ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint):

*“Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not,
And which entered not into the heart of man,
Whatsoever things God prepared for them that
love him.”*

To what topic do the expressions *things which* and *whatsoever things* refer here in context? Verses 6-16 make it very clear that the overall topic of this passage is the superiority of the wisdom of God--Jesus Christ, and him crucified--over and against human wisdom that has no appreciation for the work of the Savior on the Cross. That this is the topic at hand should be obvious from any English version,

Today's Sermon

a.m. *“Fruitless Branches”*

John 15:1-8

p.m. *Opportunity for discussion and
reflection on the morning
message*

and it is even more so when one studies the passage in the original Greek language.

No, heaven is not what Paul is speaking of when he states that *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* (KJV) I do certainly believe that this thought is true of heaven, but in context Paul speaks not of heaven but of the divine wisdom of the Cross. While no great doctrinal truth is at stake however we take this particular passage, the Bible does warn us that we must be accurate in the way we handle Scripture, lest we wrest it to our own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). A proof text without a context can too easily become a pretext for serious error in thought or in deed.

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Welcome Visitors

We are pleased to have the opportunity to welcome you to our service. We think you will find our congregation family to be one that enthusiastically embraces newcomers and warmly welcomes them into our fellowship. We hope you feel right at home as you join us in worship, praise and thanksgiving.

“REMEMBER IN PRAYER

&

ENCOURAGE”



With Visits, Calls, & Cards

All the victims of the recent explosions in Chinese port city of Tianjin.

Jesse Fowler - healing from a recent heart attack and subsequent surgical stent implantation.

Paul Moragne - healing following a procedure that flushed out some small gallstones that had caused a gall-bladder infection accompanied by much pain.

Dwight Jones - has surgery scheduled at the end of this month to remove his prostate, which is displaying some malignancy.

Angel Mangus (of Houston, TX, niece of Carl Mangus) - afflicted with inoperable stage 4 brain cancer.

Charles Espadron (Claudia's brother, in Atlanta) - diagnosed with cancer in one lung. Because of his weak heart, doctors see no treatment options.

Shirley Ervin - healing at home from recent neck surgery.

Joshua Hankins (Cheri's grandson, in Arkansas) - healing from an infection and burst eardrum.

Stephanie Smith (sister of Kevin Cox) - needs surgery for her right shoulder, but a calcium deficiency won't permit this now.

Jeff Vaccaro - for the healing a recent sun-burned blisters on both legs.

Elery Martin (friend of the Caseys, near Montgomery, AL) - five year old girl experiencing seizures, awaiting recent tests results.

Zach Steele - for success and healing through the process of receiving his long-awaited bone marrow transplant.

Cecilia McDonald (Kate's mom, in Pleasanton, Texas) - thanksgiving that her physical condition

has improved well enough for her to attend church. Pray that her health continues to improve while she receives in-home care.

Rosa Nuñez (good friend of the Vargas family) - having serious painful health problems.

Ken Cheri (Courtney's brother) - still healing well following recent successful hip replacement surgery.

Jessica Fowler (Jesse and Shirley's granddaughter, a resident of Lockport, LA) - has some vexing problems besetting her.

Terri Jones - pray that she'll come to feel better through her negative phases in her Epstein-Barr disorder.

Dale Epperley - awaiting a new prosthesis to that will relieve the pain and inflammation in his leg.

Gerald Molina - still seeing doctors for spinal stenosis. On the positive side, he has lost some weight, is breathing better, and fluid build-up throughout his body has subsided.

Jace Roig (newborn son of Colton Roig) - is home and gaining weight. But he is afflicted an arachnoid cyst in his brain, and cardiac openings that have not yet healed.

Sharon Honoré (sister of Anita, and a member at the Crowder Blvd. church) - has advanced breast cancer.

Maria Aurelia Alsaro (Marisol's mother, in Costa Rica) - afflicted with kidney problems.

Clara Leonard - overall pain continues to subside somewhat, though her ankle bothers her now.

Mildred Tymkiw - trying to schedule outpatient heart-valve surgery soon, at Ochsner Hospital in Metairie.

Bobby Leonard - awaiting test results from his recent appointment with a kidney specialist.

Micah Casey - healing from a finger cut.

Chad Michael - a recent visitor who is undergoing hardships.

Pray for all who are travelling.

Pray for Latino evangelism in our area.

**Pray for our elders: Courtney Cheri,
Dwight Jones and Gerald Molina.**

**Pray for President Obama and all our
elected officials.**

**Pray for our men and women in our
armed forces, both here and abroad!**

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The Epistles: Applying Them Today

Adapted from Fee & Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (3rd edition)

We have been discussing the subject of how to apply the New Testament epistles to our lives today. The area of application of any sort of literature to our lives today is called *hermeneutics*. What is the hermeneutics of the New Testament epistles, that is, what do these texts mean to us?

In the last article we stated that the second basic rule is actually a different way of expressing our common hermeneutics. It says: *Whenever we share comparable particulars (i.e., similar specific life situations) with the First Century setting, God's word to us is the same as his word to them.* It is this rule that causes most of the passages and the community-directed commands in the Epistles to give today's Christians a sense of identity with the First Century. It is still true that "*all have sinned*" and that "*by grace we are saved through faith.*" Clothing ourselves with "*tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness and longsuffering*" (Colossians 3:12) is still God's word to his children.

Once we have done our exegesis and have discovered God's word *to them* (the original recipients of the epistles), we have immediately brought ourselves under that same word. We still have local churches, which still have leaders who need to hear the word and take care how they build the church. It appears that the church has too often been built with wood, hay, and stubble, rather than with gold, silver, and precious stones, and such

work when tried by fire has been found wanting. First Corinthians 3:16, 17 is still God's address to us as to our responsibilities to the local church. It must be a place where God's Spirit is known to dwell, and which therefore stands as God's alternative to the sin and alienation of worldly society.

The great caution here is that we do our exegesis well, so that we have confidence that our situations and particulars are genuinely comparable to theirs. This is why the careful reconstruction of their problem is *so* important. For example, it is significant for our application today to note that the lawsuit in 1 Corinthians 6:1-11 was between two Christian brothers before a pagan judge out in the open marketplace in Corinth. The point of the text does not change if the judge happens to be a Christian or because the trial takes place in a courthouse. The wrong is for two brothers to go to law outside the church, as verses 6-11 make perfectly clear. On the other hand, one might rightly ask whether this would still apply to a Christian suing a corporation in modern America, for in this case not all the particulars would remain the same--although one's decision should surely take Paul's appeal to the non-retaliation ethic of Jesus (v. 7) into account.

All of what has been said thus far seems easy enough. But the question as to how a text such as 1 Corinthians 6:1-11 might apply *beyond* its specific particulars is but one of the several kinds of questions that needs to be discussed. The rest of this lesson addresses such problems.

The Problem of Extended Application

The first problem is the one just mentioned. When there are comparable particulars and comparable contexts in today's church, is it legitimate to extend the application of the text to other contexts, or to make a text apply to a context totally foreign to its First Century setting? For example, it might be argued that even though 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 addresses the local church, it also presents the principle that what God has set aside for himself by the indwelling of his Spirit is sacred, and whoever destroys that will come under God's awful judgment. May not this principle now be applied to the individual Christian to teach that God will judge the person who abuses his or her body? Similarly, 1

Corinthians 3:10-15 is addressing those with building responsibilities in the church, and warns of the losses they will suffer who build poorly. Since the text speaks of judgment and salvation “*as through fire,*” is it legitimate to use this text to illustrate the Christian’s spiritual security?

If these are deemed legitimate applications, then we would seem to have good reason to be concerned. For inherent in such application is the bypassing of exegesis altogether. After all, to apply 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17 to the individual Christian is precisely what many have erroneously done for centuries. Why do exegesis at all? Why not simply begin with the here and now and fall heir to centuries of error? The point is when there are comparable situations and comparable particulars, God’s word to us in such texts must always be limited to its original intent. Furthermore, the extended application is usually seen to be legitimate because it is clearly spelled out in other passages where that is the intent of the passage. In such a case, one should ask whether what one learns *only* by extended application can truly be the word of God.

A more difficult scenario is presented by a text such as 2 Corinthians 6:14, “***Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers.***” Traditionally this verse has been interpreted as forbidding marriage between a Christian and non-Christian. However, the metaphor of a *yoke* is rarely used in antiquity to refer to marriage, and there is nothing whatever in the context that remotely allows marriage to be in view here.

Our problem is that we cannot be certain as to *what* the original text is forbidding. Most likely it

has something to do with idolatry, perhaps a further prohibition of attendance at the idol feasts (cf. 1 Corinthians 10:14-22). Can we not, therefore, legitimately “extend” the principle of this text, since we cannot be sure of its original meaning? Probably so, but again, only because it is indeed a biblical principle that can be sustained apart from this single text.

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Our Leaders!

Elders

Dwight Jones
Courtney Cheri
Gerald Molina

Preacher

Dan Schillinger

Deacons

Jesse Fowler
James Richardson
Hector Urbina

Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Class **9:30 a.m.**
Sunday Morning Worship **10:30 a.m.**

Sunday Evening Worship **5:00 p.m.**

Wednesday Evening Bible Class **7:00 p.m.**

Stitches of Love **Tuesday 9:30 a.m.**